

Ogden Letter.

Ogden, Utah, June 6.—In the long ago there was in Ogden what was known in politics as the water works question. For several years it was kicked and cuffed about, until it landed in the platform of the Republican party at the city convention which nominated Bill the buffalo for mayor. After that The Question loomed up like a giant ready to destroy every one against it, or insure the political success of those candidates who stood for it. The Question became the issue on which the campaign turned and the Republican ticket won. In order to win, the Republicans promised the people that The Question would be settled in ninety days after assuming office. In other words the system of water works in general use in Ogden city would become the property of the city i. e., the people, and upon this promise the people elected the aforesaid Bill, who for the nonce, was called Bill the Wise, as mayor.

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About a year ago Matt Browning was mayor and H. H. Thomas was president of the council. These gentlemen burned the midnight oil studying The Question. They examined all its forms. The conclusion they arrived at was that the only possible chance for the city to get control of the water system was to buy from the owners. Accordingly, after much travail and sore tribulation, an offer was made the water company to pay \$45,000 for the stock of the company—the city to assume, of course, the obligation of paying the annual interest of \$20,000 on the bonds held by eastern capitalists, against the system. As the earning capacity of the water works at present rates was about \$50,000 annually the mayor and president were satisfied they had made a good bargain. Not so the people.

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There is no question that public opinion is created, fostered, swayed and buncoed by the newspapers. When Bill Glasmann and Mayor Littlefield each got out a hummer about nine-tenths of the people began to knock. In a series of lessons which find no parallel in mathematics, they stood and showed that "the deal" meant in the end a total cost of about \$750,000 to the people for the water system. Indignation meetings were held and the mayor and council were ridiculed as children in finance, if not commission merchants in disguise. There were those who openly declared there was to be a "cut up", whatever that may mean. The artists of the graft who manipulated the indignation meetings

were not in on the "cut up." They had not been consulted in the negotiations.

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The poor mayor and council were up against it. They had no newspaper, though Bill offered them the free use of his columns to defend their proposition, reserving the right to tear their arguments to tatters after his own peculiar methods, in a subsequent issue. What could they do? The people and press were against them. Every attempt to move was thwarted by an injunction. Nothing was left but to lay down; so down they went, and The Question, now the size of a mountain, was rolled over them till they were flattened beyond the pale of political recognition. In the chaos of the rout, Prest. Eccles of the water company withdrew the acceptance of the offer from the city, and quiet was restored. The advocates of "city ownership without paying for it" walked the streets rampant, while The Question hung with mighty menace over the city.

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Then came the city election and The Question entered politics. Bill was nominated because the people recognized him as the leader of the water fight. The Question was turned over to him. He threw his paper wide open and the people had water works every day for four turbulent, wearying weeks. It was Bill who made the famous ninety-day declaration. He assured the people it was a cinch. He trotted out the state constitution and proved beyond peradventure of doubt, that the way to take the water works was by "eminent domain." He kept up his eminent domain racket until he had a comparative majority of the people buncoed out of their last reserve of common sense, and he was elected. The cry of victory from five points of Berch creek echoed from the mountain to West Ogden. It was a glad day. The Question had been settled.

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No sooner had the Republican officers warmed the chairs of their predecessors than they began to hedge on the water works. The city attorney hastened to deny that he had fathered the ninety-day proposition. The Standard shut up titer than a clam and no word on The Question has escaped it to this day. The ninety days were up April 1st, and what an April fool was there, my countrymen! Not a move has been made, not an inch of ground gained. The mayor spends his official time in hauling the council selected samples of warm packages, while the councilmen turn the council meetings into free, open roasts for the mayor. The water company is still drawing dividends while the people go home and

ponder over a choice gold brick, labelled "The Question."

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There is but one word more before the finale is reached. The whirligig of justice is sometimes a little slow in getting round, but when it gets there Mayor Browning and H. H. Thomas will be recognized as two of the ablest representatives the people ever had. The present city government has already arrived at the conclusion that the one opportunity for getting possession of the water works was when Messrs. Browning and Thomas had the purchase well in hand. Already the people are preparing to kick themselves for spoiling the only chance for doing business with the water company. The lesson we learn from these sad words, Willie dear, is that the action of the people is sometimes incomprehensible; and the moral is: Public opinion moulded by bunco-steerers is liable not to assay very fine.

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No my dear Gaston, there will be no Morning Sun. That was only a little experiment Bill was trying on the people's credulity. No, he had no Associated Press franchise. That was just a little fun he was having with the Salt Lake papers. It was one of Bill's jokes. You see, to get a morning franchise he would have to get the consent of the Tribune and Herald, and as these papers were not consulted the joke readily appears. Yes, he still owns the Standard; that was the best joke of all. The way of it was, Bill expected to touch the pocket nerve of some of his rich political associates, but the pocket nerve is exceedingly sensitive, you know. Col. Mazuma was a little off his feed, and there was nothing doin'. That's where the joke comes in. Bill is so fond of a good, rich joke. And so, vale Sun, vive Standard. After you, my dear Alphonse.

SERVED HIM RIGHT.

They stood on the lava encrusted shore of the little island that had been destroyed by the volcano. Blazing currents still ran down the sides of the mountain, while the very air seemed full of fire.

A man who all along had seemed to be making every effort to control himself, at last turned to a companion and chuckled:

"Is it hot enough for you?"

The task of hurling him into the belching crater was, indeed, a glad surcease from the woe of the inhabitants.—Baltimore American.

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